# HOW NOTED MEN LAUGH.

*A WELL-KNOWN COMEDIAN WRITES ABOUT GROVER CLEVELAND.*

**Richard Croker's Ha! Ha!—The Way McKinley Was Nearly Ejected From a Theatre for Loud Laughing.**

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Laughter, while not a very elevated subject for study in the abstract, is very interesting in connection with character studies of famous individuals. I hope it is not egotistical to say that I believe I have had more opportunities of studying the different ways in which famous men from Grover Cleveland to Richard Croker laugh than most people. The results of my observations which I give here form, of course, impressions produced upon a performer on the stage.

President Cleveland isn't a pretty smiler, but his laugh is all right. He smiles like a Chinaman enjoying a big streak of luck at fan tan; the outer corners of his eyes go up and the inner corners go down; both lids are suffused with a sort of fluttersome glee, while a prize-pumpkin-like glow fills his cheeks and his lips bow up and are braced tight as if he was afraid he was going to spill something. His smile isn't far reaching; it is sus-

JOE JEFFERSON'S NANNY GOAT LAUGH.

picious; but his laugh is hearty and honest, and if it was not that he has to treat it with a certain measure of dignity it might become a mild sort of welkin-ringer. He was in a box at the Standard theatre, New York, one night, enjoying a performance and when in the play a bogus old lady from Brazil began to disrobe in a garden, the President threw his head back and emitted a several horse power guffaw such as he must have indulged in unreservedly when he was the sheriff of Buffalo. Unlike most fat men Cleveland doesn't jell when he laughs. His cacchination is all of the thoracic quality and there is no twinkling of his waist band while the spasm of uncontrolled merriment has hold of him.

Senator D. B. Hill whose laugh was also measured at a recent performance is another loud laughter when he wants to be. The cartoons which have been printed depicting him in a high white hat with a wainscoating of crape around it give the impression that he is funereal and as undissoluble as a tombstone, but

PARKHURST IS BRIMFUL OF JOVIALITY.

mirth always has a warm welcome and his ha! ha! is as healthy and get-thereative as any in the land. Still there are some anti-snappers who say that Hill can "smile and smile and be a villain still."

Ex-President Harrison isn't much of a laugher. He doesn't thaw to any wild extent under the rays of fun. He acts as if the laugh was going to cost him something, and he approaches it very cautiously, throwing out a smile for a feeler and then venturing into a B flat intonation of his joy that is a good distance this side of being boisterous. Harrison's laugh, whenever it does scar into sound, seems to ooze out of a kazoo. There is too much frappeeness in it to be infectious.

Governor Flower, of New York has a well fed laugh. It is robust and resonant and yet there is something decidedly cherubic about it. When you see the governor's face all lit up with glowing good nature between his jolly side whiskers, you cannot help think of those curly heads with wings that Coreggio and those other chaps used to paint.

Senator Peffer laughs right down into his whiskers. So much has been written about the corruscating Kansan's wind gatherers that this statement may be looked upon as a further attempt at

FLOWERS' CHERUB LAUGH.

comicality in this direction, but it is a positive and Pefferian fact. When the Senator finds anything to laugh at he bows his head low, inclining it to the right, and lets a gentle, gurgling laugh percolate through and permeate his beautiful and abundant whiskers. It is not a cyclonic laugh and the luxuriant "ilocks" are not startled by it.

Silver Dollar Bland has a b'gosh t'lmighty laugh, but its backwoodiness has had the corners taken off in Washington, and when the first surprise that it expresses at the joke that has provoked it passes away, it simmers down to an anapestic, diplomatic acquiescence in the fun, and lets the rest of the crowd keep up the dithyrambic end of the merriment.

Henry Irving holds his sides when he laughs and tries to make it appear that he is enjoying himself, but he laughs

COMMODORE GERRY CHUCKLES.

through his nose and there is too much catarrh and brogue in his cacchination. Ellen Terry has a deep and dismal Lady Macbeth laugh. One would think a woman like her had a tinklesome, silvery laugh, but she hasn't. Neither has Ada Rehan, who couldn't sing the tenor end of a laughing song if she got $40 a note for doing it.

While stage women are on the point of the pen it may as well be said that Viola Allen, of the Empire Theatre Stock company has as cute and catching a laugh as anybody ever heard, and she can give it with many variations, while Maud Adams, of John Drew's "The Butterflies," company is unapproachable in staccatoing a laugh and letting it out of her system in the sweetest and most irresistible of timid and tiny shrieks.

Rev. Charles H. Parkhurst, the vice-explorer and all round reformer, is a good fellow and fairly brims over with joviality. There is nothing shad-bellied or Stigginsy about him. Dr. Parkhurst will slap you on the back when he asks after your health and if you tell him a funny story he will laugh at it with all the enthusiasm of a school boy. His eyes glisten when he tells of the queer things he saw when he went dive discovering.

Rev. T. DeWitt Talmage has a theatrical laugh. It is in three acts and at points it is spectacular. It begins with he! he! he! developes into a climatic ha!

IRVING MAKES BELIEVE HE IS LAUGHING.

ha! ha! and denouements with ho! ho! ho! in the last gust of which there is a facial transformation scene with some responsive red fire from his tonsilatic regions.

Commodore Gerry looks his laughing best when he has his fur cap on and the earlaps are tied under his chin. He is not the ogre he is painted. He has quite a sunshiny nature and really loves children, although he seems to be cruel to them sometimes. Little Zelda Saunders, the wee actress, got up an anti-Gerry society, and absolutely browbeat him before the New York legislature, but when he was in Paris last summer he paid $50 for a talking doll and sent it to her. He chuckled considerably over the way in which he got even with the child. His chuckle is the best he can do in the laughing line.

Governor McKinley, of Ohio, is a free-trader when it comes to fun and laughter.

PEFFER LAUGHS INTO HIS WHISKERS.

He leans back in his chair and roars when anything tickles his fancy. The manager of a New York theatre one night heard peal after peal of merriment roll over the audience. Calling an usher he said, "Hunt up that fellow that's laughing so much—he's a professional laugher, I'll bet—and put him out!" "Why no, that's Governor McKinley," said the usher. And so it was. He was with Mrs. McKinley and some members of his staff in a stage box. He gave the audience its cue for every laugh in the play.

Tammany Chief Dick Croker takes his two boys to the theatre and keeps his eye on them. When they laugh he laughs and his laugh is not of the smothered variety, but clarion voiced and occasionally dissilient.

Police Superintendent Byrnes laughs are always on stilts. Byrnes is a big man in a big town and his dignity will not permit him to double himself up with hilarity and holler out his happiness as he used to do in the good old days when he was Patrolman Byrnes. His is a condescending laugh with no more comfort in it than there would be in a complimentary ticket to one's own grandmother's funeral.

The Pinkertons are great laughers, though. Bob Pinkerton always has his "laff" with him and let's it-go-Gallagher on the least provocation. He can be heard in the next county when he laughs. Billy Pinkerton, who makes his headquaters in Chicago, now uses his World's Fair laugh entirely. He picked it up on the Midway Plaisance where it was known as the high-tiddy-igh-digh. It's the laugh that the jays got who "blew in" their money on this highway of Joy. Billy, it is said, uses only one eye even when he is laughing uproarously; the other is roaming around in the crowd looking for crooks.

Joe Jefferson, the comedian, has a nanny goat laugh. He does it best when he is talking to the children in the second act of Rip Van Winkle, but Buzzard's Bay is well acquainted with it and all Joe's friends could pick it out if it was mixed up with a bagful of the quaintest laugh in existence.

ETIENNE GIRARDOT.

### Thackeray's Return.

Once the letters began to arrive from America we were all much happier, for we seemed in touch with him once more, and to know what was happening. He was fairly well and in good spirits, and making friends and making money. I remember his writing home on one occasion and asking us to send him out a couple of new stomachs, so hospitable were his friends over the water, so numerous the dinners and suppers to which he was invited. When the long summer and winter were over and the still longer spring, suddenly one day we heard that he was coming back much sooner than he expected. I believe he saw a steamer starting for home and could stand it no longer, and then and there came off.

I can still remember sitting with my grandparents, expecting his return. My sister and I sat on the red sofa in the little study, and shortly before the time we had calculated that he might arrive came a little ring at the front-door bell. My grandmother broke down; my sister and I rushed to the front door, only we were so afraid that it might not be he that we did not dare to open it, and there we stood until a second and much louder ringing brought us to our senses. "Why didn't you open the door?" said my father, stepping in, looking well, broad, and upright, laughing. In a moment he had never been away at all.—Anne Ritchie, in Longman's Magazine.

### The Smallest Coin is a Greek Lepton.

Which is at the same time the smallest coin and the coin of least value at present current in Europe? In the absence of a knowledge of any smaller and more worthless, I should be inclined (writes a correspondent) to award the palm to the Greek lepton, a specimen of which has recently come into my hands. It is about the same size as the Italian centesimo, and the way to get one is to buy something marked 4 lepta, give a pendara, or Greek halfpenny, and wait for the change.

The lepton is, according to the decimal monetary system current in countries belonging to the Latin Union, the hundredth part of the drachma. Now, the Greek drachma is, while nominally the equivalent of the franc or the lira, at present worth rather less than 6d., the rate of exchange about a fortnight ago being 42.60 drachmas to an English sovereign. The lepton is therefore approximately worth about one-fifth of an English farthing. In nothing does the deplorable condition of Greek finances strike the casual observer more forcibly than in the fact that at present Greece has no "money" but copper, and is obliged to issue bank notes for sums of sixpence upward, and a nastier little rag than the one-drachma note it would be difficult to find. All travelers in Greece should provide themselves with a small pair of tongs to take them up.—Westminster Gazette.

An elephant is 50 to 60 years in attaining maturity, and will live a century and a half.

# HOW TO HIT A BASEBALL.

*THE GREAT GIANTS' BATSMAN GIVES SOME POINTS.*

**The Needless Use of Energy—How to Outwit Pitchers When They Adopt Curves—List of Hard Hitters.**

(Copyright, 1894, for The Times.)

I cannot say that I am in thorough accord with some famous critic who once said that "A batsman is born, not made," and that while a man could learn how to field and run the bases he could never learn how to bat if it was not in him.

He must learn to hold the willow properly, as a matter of course, but most players have a way of their own in this matter. There should always be a free and easy swing, never too tight nor yet too loose.

My experience and that of my fellow players has been that to become an expert batsman and to achieve to that greatness, to lead the League, an ambition possessed by every ball player, a


GEORGE S. DAVIS.

man must have a keen, quick eye. If you have the chance to look closely into the faces of such men as Anson, Brouthers, Duffy, and numerous other players whom I might mention, just take a careful inventory of their eyes and if you are a judge of human nature and can read the "language of the eye," you will, I think, at once come to the conclusion that they are leaders among their fellows.

If that old phrase had been, "Without a quick eye a ball player could never hope to become a great batsman," nobody would have been able to dispute the assertion. Of course one can train the eye to a certain extent, but not with the certainty and dispatch with which one can train and develop the muscles. I have also heard it said that muscle and brute strength were all that was necessary for a man to become a great ball player. It would be just as reasonable to say that plenty of lung power was all

DAVIS MAKING HIS FAMOUS HOME RUN HIT.

that was necessary to become a famous orator.

As I am supposed to write something which will instruct the young idea how to shoot, or rather, how to play ball from a batting standpoint, I can take my own case for instance. I think that a man can learn to hit, for I certainly learned what I know about "smacking the ball on the trade mark" as the boys sometimes put it.

There is much in not starting wildly to run immediately upon making a hit. Understand well where to send the ball, give one swift look when you have hit it and then make for first base. To become a good batsman a man must have plenty of nerve. He cannot afford to be afraid of the ball, and he must avoid stepping or drawing away from the plate when the pitcher sends the ball whizzing over the little rubber plate. If a man is afraid of being hit, the pitcher is not long in becoming conversant with the fact, and as soon as he does, that means his batting record will tumble. No pitcher, or very few of them, would inten-

DAVIS STARTS FOR FIRST BASE.

tionally injure a fellow player by hitting him with the ball, still the twirler might send the curves dangerously close and thus intimidate the batsman; and "knock all the base hits out of him."

I know a great many clever batsmen who practice daily before a looking glass just as actors and actresses do when they are rehearsing a part. By standing in front of a big glass bat in hand, one can study his position and remedy any defects he may have. He must stand up squarely and face the pitcher and never flinch. If you should happen to be hit with the ball forget it as quickly as possible, for many a good batsman has seen his batting fame fade away after he has been struck by a pitched ball.

A man can learn to do almost anything in reason with careful, conscientious prac-

DAVIS STEALING SECOND.

tice, although some men or boys can never hope to be really first class batsmen because there is something in their moral or physical make-up, which prevents it. Still, with careful practice and by close attention to the details they can unquestionably learn to be batsmen of average ability.

I like to see a man stand up at the plate, face the pitcher squarely and show in every line that he means business. These are the fellows the pitchers are afraid of. I like to see a man stand with his feet well together and I do not like to see a man with his foot reaching toward third base or first base as the case may be, according to whether he is a right or a left-handed batsman.

The proper position is to stand erect. When the ball leaves the pitcher and if you are going to step at all, step forward and meet it, and never under any consideration step away from it. Place hitting—a point in play which many people think impossible—is unquestionably coming into vogue.

It might be interesting right here to mention the champion batsmen who have led the National League since that organization was formed in 1876. It will be seen that Stenzel has the heaviest batting record ever made in the league. Anson has the next best average. Brouthers is the only man who ever led the league two years in succession. Here is the list:

| Year. | Batsmen. | Club. | Av'ge. |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1876 | Barnes | Chicago | .403 |
| 1877 | White | Boston | .385 |
| 1878 | Dalrymple | Milwaukee | .356 |
| 1879 | Anson | Chicago | .467 |
| 1880 | Gore | Chicago | .365 |
| 1881 | Anson | Chicago | .399 |
| 1882 | Brouthers | Buffalo | .367 |
| 1883 | Brouthers | Buffalo | .371 |
| 1884 | O'Rouke | Buffalo | .350 |
| 1885 | Connor | New York | .371 |
| 1886 | Kelly | Chicago | .388 |
| 1887 | Maul | Philadelphia | .643 |
| 1888 | Anson | Chicago | .343 |
| 1889 | Brouthers | Boston | .313 |
| 1890 | Luby | Chicago | .342 |
| 1891 | Hamilton | Philadelphia | .638 |
| 1892 | Brouthers | Brooklyn | .335 |
| 1893 | Stenzel | Pittsburg | .409 |

Dave Orr, whose light went out before its time, was, I think, one of the grandest batsmen this country has ever produced. Dave was a natural hitter, if one ever lived, and he could hit a ball awfully hard. Anson is another great hitter, and so is Brouthers.

McCarthy and Duffy are as good to-day at strategetic batting, purely scientific, as any we have in this country. They work a pitcher from the time they take the bat in hand. They also work the infielders and when they get the infield moving about and running they are pretty sure to make a hit.

GEORGE S. DAVIS.

### Cruikshank at Seventy-Six.

Walter Hamilton tells us that George Cruikshank "sang the old English ballad" in the manner of a street-ballad singer at a dinner of the antiquarian society, at which Dickens and Thackeray were present. The latter is reported to have remarked, "I should like to print that ballad, with illustrations," but Cruikshank warned him off, saying that this was exactly what he himself had resolved to do. The original ballad was much longer than that which Cruikshank illustrated, and to which Charles Dickens furnished humorous notes, and was not comic in any respect.

"Lord Bateman" was Cruikshank's delight. The exquisite foolery expressed in his plates of this eccentric nobleman he would act, at any moment, in any place, to the end of his life. Mr. Percival Leigh remembers a characteristic scene at the Cheshire Cheese, Fleet street, about 1842 or 1843. "This," he says, "was in G. C.'s pre-teetotal period. After dinner came drink and smoke, of course; and G. C. was induced to sing 'Billy Taylor,' which he did with grotesque expression and action, varied to suit the words. He likewise sang 'Lord Bateman' in his shirt sleeves, with his coat flung cloakwise over his left arm, while he paced up and down, disporting himself with a walking stick, after the manner of the noble lord, as represented in his illustration to the ballad."

Six-and-twenty years afterward we find the bright-hearted old man still with spirits enough for his favorite parts.

"One day," says Mr. Frederick Locker, "he asked us to tea and to hear him sing 'Lord Bateman' in character, which he did to our infinite delight. He posed in the costume of that deeply-interesting, but somewhat mysterious nobleman. I am often reminded of the circumstance; for I have a copy of 'Lord Bateman,' (1851,) and on the false title is written:

"'This evening, July 13, 1868,
"'I sang "Lord Bateman"
"'to
"'My dear little friend, Eleanor Locker.
"'George Cruikshank.'"

This in his seventy-sixth year!—The Gentleman's Magazine.

### What is a Croft?

The origon of "croft" itself is "wrop in mystery." It is a very old English term, appearing in the charters of title deeds of estates as long ago as the reign of Edgar, where the phrase "at the croft's head" is quoted by Dr. Murray; but it remained long unrecognized in the literary language. The old English form, like the modern one, is "croft," meaning an inclosed field; in Lowland Scotch it appears generally in the form "craft," which is still employed in many derivatives; but the only other Teutonic equivalent in the sister languages is the Dutch word "kroft," which means "a piece of high and dry land," "a field on the downs," "a rocky headland." In the North of England, according to Ray, the "croft" implies neighborhood to a house; but in the South it is applied to any small inclosure, near a building or otherwise.

Dr. Murray's English Dictionary gives several uses of croft in early times, though not for the most part in what can fairly be called literature. "As he stood in his croft," says a legal writer of the thirteenth century, whose spelling and grammar I mercifully modernize; while Piers Plowman writes: "Birds come into my croft and crop my wheat." Early in the sixteenth century Fitzherbert defines a curtylage (whatever that may be) as a "a lytell croft or court to put in catell for a tyme." In the seventeenth century the phrase occurs, "All ould tenants shall have a croft and a medow," which sounds as if it came out of a Crofter Commission report. But it was Milton who first ennobled the plebeian word by admitting it frankly into immortal poetry. The Spirit in "Comus" says to the Elder Brother:

This have I learned
Tending my flocks hard by i' th' hilly crofts
That brow this bottom glade.
—The Cornhill Magazine.

### The Extinction of War.

We have little more hope of the extinction of war, or of the burden now so terrible—of military preparation. It is as certain that nations will quarrel as that individuals will; it is most improbable that when the quarrel is vital they will submit to arbitration, and when the quarrel has once attained that height, there is no substitute for war even conceivable by the mind. War might be stopped in the rest of the world by the five European powers agreeing to give judgment in every case of dispute and to enforce that judgment collectively. But even that nearly impracticable system—impracticable because the supreme tribunal could hardly punish either the United States or China, if either chose to resist to the death—would be powerless to avert war if the five powers quarreled, as they are now doing, among themselves.

Nor are we sure that if war could be prevented, the long years of bickering, boycotting, and brutality, such as have for twenty-three years divided Germany and France, would be so acceptable a substitute, or would tend in any solid way to make mankind either happier or more noble. It is far easier to reduce war to a minimum than to extinguish it, and there is fair reason to hope that this is being done. The progress of military science, and, indeed, of all science, has shortened wars, has arrested the old pillage of provinces, and has rendered the coercion, which means the oppression, of peaceful citizens much less necessary.

No army will starve while the citizen has food, but good commissariat arrangements have stopped that horrible plunder of necessaries which, even in the wars at the beginning of this century, made invasion worse than pestilence and converted regular troops into ravening mobs of brigands.—The Spectator.